GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:74
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2002
STARVATION DEATHS
A. VENKATESH NAIK;RASA SINGH RAWAT

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Union Government has been drawn to the news items appearing in various newspapers regarding starvation deaths in various States especially Orissa and Rajasthan during the last six months;

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken for ensuring proper supply of foodgrains to these areas;

(c) the norms being adopted by the Government to issue Below Poverty Line ration card to persons in these States;

(d) whether the women having more than three male children were denied this card;

(e) if so, the reasons therefore;

(f) the State-wise number of starvation deaths reported at present; and

(g) the remedial measures undertaken by the Government to check such recurrence in future?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI SHARAD YADAV)

(a) to (g): A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) to (g) OF STARRED QUESTION NO.74 DUE FOR ANSWER ON 2 2002 IN THE LOK SABHA.

(a): Yes, Sir.

(b): In addition to the normal allotment of foodgrains under the Targetted Public Distribution System, 19.25 lakh tonnes of foodgrains have been allocated to 12 drought affected States, including Orissa and Rajasthan, between 24th September and 19th November, 2002 under the Special Component of the Sampoorna Gramin Rozgar Yojana.

(c): The State Governments formulate and implement arrangements for identification of the poor for delivery of foodgrains to fair price shops and for distribution, in a transparent and accountable manner, through the Fair Price Shops. As per the Guidelines of the Central Government for identification of Below the Poverty Line families, the thrust is to cover the really poor and vulnerable sections of the society, such as landless agricultural labourers, marginal farmers, rural artisans/craftsmen, such as potters, tappers, weavers, black-smiths and carpenters, in the rural areas, and slum dwellers and persons earning their livelihood on a daily basis in the informal sectors like porters, coolies, rickshaw pullers, hand-cart pullers and pavement fruit/flower sellers in urban areas.

(d)&(e): No such specific cases have been reported.

(f)&(g): No State Government has reported starvation deaths. Following the visits of Central Teams to Orissa and Rajasthan, among other States, the State Governments have been addressed to put in place a fully functional Public Distribution System in the vulnerable areas and to provide uninterrupted supply and distribution of foodgrains to the same. It has also been stressed that employment generation programmes ought to be implemented vigorously and that the State authorities have to ensure requisite measures to combat starvation and extreme hardship at the earliest.